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General Assembly

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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Resolution adopted by the Special Committee at its 9th meeting, on 29 June 1999

Question of Tokelau

The Special Committee,

Having considered the question of Tokelau,

Recalling the solemn declaration on the future status of Tokelau, delivered by the *Ulu-o-Tokelau* (the highest authority on Tokelau) on 30 July 1994, that an act of self-determination in Tokelau is now under active consideration, together with the constitution of a self-governing Tokelau, and that the present preference of Tokelau is for a status of free association with New Zealand,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and all resolutions and decisions of the United Nations relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories, in particular, General Assembly resolution 53/66 of 3 December 1998,

Recalling further the emphasis placed in the solemn declaration on the terms of Tokelau's intended free association relationship with New Zealand, including the expectation that the form of help Tokelau could continue to expect from New Zealand in promoting the well-being of its people, besides its external interests, would be clearly established in the framework of that relationship,

Noting with appreciation the continuing exemplary cooperation of New Zealand as the administering Power with regard to the work of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to Tokelau and its readiness to permit access by United Nations visiting missions to the Territory,

Noting also with appreciation the collaborative contribution to the development of Tokelau by New Zealand and the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme and the International Telecommunication Union,

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Recalling the dispatch in 1994 of a United Nations visiting mission to Tokelau,

Noting that, as a small island Territory, Tokelau exemplifies the situation of most remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories,

Noting also that, as a case study pointing to successful decolonization, Tokelau has wider significance for the United Nations as it seeks to complete its work in decolonization,

1. *Notes* that Tokelau remains firmly committed to the development of self-government and to an act of self-determination that would result in Tokelau assuming a status in accordance with the options on future status for Non-Self-Governing Territories contained in principle VI of the annex to General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960;

2. *Also notes* Tokelau's desire to move at its own pace towards an act of self-determination;

3. *Further notes* the inauguration in 1999 of a national Government based on village elections by universal adult suffrage;

4. *Commends* Tokelau's ongoing work in charting a distinctive constitutional course, reflecting its unique traditions and environment;

5. *Also commends* Tokelau for current initiatives and endeavours, based on wide consultation with its people, to construct a true "house of Tokelau", acknowledging the role of the village as the foundation of Tokelau, as well as the need to continue the process of strengthening the basis of national self-government and the aim of establishing the capacity for economic survival in a sustainable way;

6. *Acknowledges* the attention being given to broader matters of governance, including the upgrading of financial regulations, to establish clear local channels of responsibility in national and village government;

7. *Notes* that, responding to the desire of Tokelau, the New Zealand Government has legislation in place to enable responsibility for the Tokelau Public Service to be passed from the State Services Commissioner in New Zealand to Tokelau, the timing to be set by mutual agreement when Tokelau has established a suitable local employment framework;

8. *Acknowledges* Tokelau's need for reassurance, given that local resources cannot adequately cover the material side of self-determination, and the ongoing responsibility of Tokelau's external partners to assist Tokelau in balancing its desire to be self-reliant to the greatest extent possible with its need for external assistance;

9. *Welcomes* the assurances of the Government of New Zealand that it will meet its obligations to the United Nations with respect to Tokelau and abide by the freely expressed wishes of the people of Tokelau with regard to their future status;

10. *Also welcomes* the statement on official development assistance cooperation between New Zealand and Tokelau, setting out the direction and broad structure of New Zealand official development assistance to Tokelau, to better meet new development and governance needs in the medium term;

11. *Calls upon* the administering Power and United Nations agencies to continue their assistance to Tokelau, as it further develops its economy and governance structures within the context of its ongoing constitutional evolution;

12. *Decides* to continue examination of the question of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of Tokelau and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.